

**MORRIS KNOLLS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW JERSEY BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 6, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Tommy Scalici of Morris Knolls High School as its 2018-19 Gatorade New Jersey Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Scalici is the first Gatorade New Jersey Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Morris Knolls High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Scalici as New Jersey's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Scalici joins an elite alumni association of past state soccer award-winners, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook High School, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel High School, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy School of Young Women, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick High School, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-04, Blue Valley West High School, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire High School, Mass.) and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colo.).

The 5-foot-10, 150-pound senior forward scored 30 goals and passed for 15 assists this past season, leading the Golden Eagles (16-10-2) to the Group 4 state championship game. A two-time United Soccer Coaches All-American selection, Scalici was twice named the Soccer Coaches Association of New Jersey Player of the Year and was a 2018 First Team All-State honoree. He concluded his prep soccer career with 84 goals and 49 assists.

Scalici has volunteered locally on behalf of soccer and basketball programs for special-needs children in addition to donating his time as a youth soccer coach and counselor. "Tommy is one of the best players I have seen pass through New Jersey," said George Mousis, head coach of Randolph High. "He is composed on the ball and has a very high soccer IQ. It seems as though the game slows down for him."

Scalici has maintained an A average in the classroom and represents one of the state's top academic candidates in meeting the Gatorade award's broad criteria. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in soccer on scholarship at St. John's University this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Scalici joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Boys Soccer Players of the Year Sebastian Chalbaud (2017-18, St. Benedict's Prep), Mason Toye (2016-17, Seton Hall Preparatory School), Johnny Antunes (2015-16, St. Benedict's Prep), Brian Hawkins (2014-15, Notre Dame High School) and James Murphy (2013-14, Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Scalici also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of his choosing. He is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit www.Gatorade.com/POY, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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